

**REVISED JUDICATURE ACT OF 1961 (EXCERPT)**  
**Act 236 of 1961**

**600.550a New judicial circuit and 1 or more circuit judgeships; creation; approval by county; resolution; filing; notice to elections division; effect of approval; state's obligation; election; first term; approval of county board of commissioners not required.**

Sec. 550a. (1) If a new judicial circuit is proposed by law, that new circuit shall not be created and any circuit judgeship proposed for the circuit shall not be authorized or filled by election unless each county in the proposed circuit, by resolution adopted by the county board of commissioners, approves the creation of the new circuit and each judgeship proposed for the circuit and unless the clerk of each county adopting that resolution files a copy of the resolution with the state court administrator not later than 4 p.m. of the sixteenth Tuesday preceding the August primary immediately following the effective date of the amendatory act permitting the creation of the new circuit. The state court administrator shall immediately notify the elections division of the department of state with respect to each new judicial circuit and circuit judgeship authorized under this subsection.

(2) By proposing a new judicial circuit and 1 or more circuit judgeships for the circuit, the legislature is not creating that circuit or any judgeship in the circuit. If a county, acting through its board of commissioners, approves the creation of a new circuit and 1 or more circuit judgeships proposed by law for that circuit, that approval constitutes an exercise of the county's option to provide a new activity or service or to increase the level of activity or service offered in the county beyond that required by existing law, as the elements of that option are defined by 1979 PA 101, MCL 21.231 to 21.244, and a voluntary acceptance by the county of all expenses and capital improvements that may result from the creation of the new circuit and each judgeship. However, the exercise of the option does not affect the state's obligation to pay a portion of the circuit judge's or judges' salary as provided by law, or to appropriate and disburse funds to the county for the necessary costs of state requirements established by a state law that takes effect on or after December 23, 1978.

(3) Each circuit judgeship created under subsection (1) shall be filled by election under the Michigan election law, 1954 PA 116, MCL 168.1 to 168.992. The first term of each circuit judgeship is 6 years, unless the law permitting the creation of the new circuit and 1 or more judgeships provides for a term of a different length.

(4) The reformation of the eleventh, twenty-third, twenty-sixth, thirty-fourth, fiftieth, and fifty-third judicial circuits under 2002 PA 92 does not require a resolution of approval by the county board of commissioners under this section or section 550.

**History:** Add. 1980, Act 129, Imd. Eff. May 22, 1980;—Am. 1990, Act 54, Imd. Eff. Apr. 11, 1990;—Am. 2002, Act 92, Eff. Mar. 31, 2003;—Am. 2012, Act 36, Imd. Eff. Feb. 28, 2012.

**Compiler's note:** Sections 2 to 5 of Act 129 of 1980 provide:

**"New circuit and district judgeships; appearance on ballot; duty of candidate; petitions; filing fee.**

"Section 2. The new circuit and district judgeships authorized by this amendatory act shall appear on the ballot separate and apart from other judicial offices on the ballot in the primary and general election in the respective circuits and district court districts. If another judicial office of the same court is to be filled by election in the same circuit, county, or district, a candidate for a new judgeship authorized in that circuit, county, or district by this amendatory act shall indicate, at the time of filing nominating petitions, whether the candidate is filing for a new judgeship or for 1 of the other judicial offices of the same court to be filled by election in 1980. Petitions for a new judgeship created pursuant to this amendatory act shall bear signatures affixed to the petition after the date by which all counties in the circuit, all district control units in the district, or, in the case of a probate judgeship, the county, have adopted the resolutions required by law to create that office. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a nonreturnable filing fee of \$250.00 may be paid up to 4 p.m. on June 3, 1980 in lieu of petitions for new judgeships authorized by this 1980 amendatory act which are to be filled by election in 1980.

**"Additional circuit judgeship for third judicial circuit; terms.**

"Section 3. If the additional circuit judgeship permitted by this amendatory act for the third judicial circuit is created pursuant to law, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes in the 1980 general election shall be elected for a term of 8 years, and the candidate receiving the second highest number of votes shall be elected for a term of 6 years.

**"Additional circuit judgeship for sixteenth judicial circuit; term.**

"Section 4. If the additional circuit judgeship permitted by this amendatory act for the sixteenth judicial circuit is created pursuant to law, the first term of that judgeship shall be 8 years.

**"Change in composition of affected judicial circuits; effective date.**

"Section 5. If a new judicial circuit of the circuit court is created pursuant to section 550a, the change in the composition of the affected judicial circuits shall take effect for judicial purposes on January 1, 1981. If the fifty-fourth judicial circuit is created pursuant to this act, the incumbent circuit judge of the fortieth judicial circuit who resides in Tuscola county shall become the judge of the fifty-fourth judicial circuit on January 1, 1981, and shall serve until the term for which he was elected in the fortieth judicial circuit expires."

Section 2 of Act 54 of 1990 provides:

"If a new judicial circuit of the circuit court is created under this amendatory act pursuant to section 550a, the change in the composition of the affected judicial circuits shall take effect for judicial purposes on January 1, 1991. If the fifty-sixth judicial circuit is created pursuant to this amendatory act, the incumbent judge of the fifth judicial circuit who resides in Eaton county shall become the judge of the fifty-sixth judicial circuit on January 1, 1991, and shall serve until the term for which he or she was elected in the fifth

judicial circuit expires.”